

Shrewsbury Commission on Disabilities
Minutes of December 14, 2004

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Keith Willette at 7 p.m. in Meeting Room A.

Members in Attendance

Keith Willette - Chair
Barbara Smith - Secretary
Jerry Berrier - Communication and Web Site Liason
Loretta Henry - Senior Center Liason

Members Not in Attendance

Gail Sokolowski - Vice Chair
Dan Morgado - Town Manager

Guests

Michael Hale - Assistant Town Manager

Town Liason Report

Michael Hale reported that he had received a letter from the Center for Living and Working stating Shrewsbury was not in full compliance with handicapped accessibility for polling locations, but then received another letter two days later from the Massachusetts Office of Disability stating that we are now in compliance. Therefore it is assumed that the two letters crossed in the mail, and everyone is now aware of Shrewsbury being in compliance with accessibility for polling locations. Michael Hale also stated that he sent a letter out to the Center for Living and Working making them aware of the full compliance.

Mr. Hale also mentioned the Town Beautification project is all completed except for a few "punch list" items to be done and the audible signals are installed and operating at all of the crosswalks at Rte. 140 and Main Street and are to be completed in the Spring. He also stated that there are plans for

audible signals to be installed at the intersections and North and South Quinsigamond Avenues.

He also mentioned that he had been contacted by Lou Boursma, a previous guest at a Commission Meeting addressing the issue of the width of the sidewalk on the east side of Rte. 140 going southbound from Main Street. There is a door to that building that has a landing and stairs descending to the sidewalk which does not meet regulations for wheelchair accessibility. Mr. Hale stated that the design to renovate that is completed and should be done in the Spring. The Town still needs to obtain the property owner's approval since this is private property and not a "right of way".

Appointments

None

Phone Log

None

Bills

None

Member Discussion

Keith Willette stated concern regarding vehicles making a "Right on Red" at both the Rte. 140/Main Street and the Main Street/South Street intersections and observed that there hasn't been compliance in yielding to pedestrians. Michael Hale stated that the curb was "bumped out" at the Rte. 140/ Main Street intersections in an attempt to slow vehicles down when they do make the right on red.

Mr. Willette also stated that he had sent an e-mail to Dan Morgado regarding concern about the sidewalk in front of St. Mary's Church not having any distinction between the parking lot and the sidewalk. There were cars parked in this area and blocking the sidewalk, which then forced him to walk out onto Main Street. Mr. Hale stated that vehicles have been ticketed in the

past and has made the pastor of the church aware of the situation.

Jerry Berrier stated he wanted to compose an article for the Council on Aging newsletter regarding the excellent work that was done on the audible signals as part of the Town Beautification, and asked Mr. Hale for information on exactly how they operate so it can be communicated to the public. Loretta Henry offered to put it in the Senior Newsletter.

Ms. Henry also offered to check the phone log and report any messages at future Commission meetings.

Keith Willette also brought up an issue of availability of the Floral Street School cafeteria to the Stepping Stone Theater (an inclusive theater for cognitively and physically impaired adolescents and adults). The theater company uses this space once a week and has a scheduled time reserved every week. He stated that the staff at Floral Street School has routinely “bumped” the theater company out of the space for various reasons, although they pay a fee for the usage of this space. This creates a great inconvenience for the members of the theater, especially regarding pre-arranged transportation. The Commission agreed to send a letter to Dr. Bent, School Superintendant asking for his assistance in resolving this issue.

Loretta Henry stated a problem regarding Precinct 5 (Town Water/Sewer Building) polling location. There was a ramp only at the Precinct 8 doorway and not at Precinct 5, which forced her having to “jump” the doorway into Precinct 5 with her wheelchair and then having to exit through Precinct 8 doorway. This resulted in a commotion being made at the polling place and an embarrassment to her. She called Mr. Morgado’s office concerning this issue, but has not yet heard back. Mr. Willette said he would send an e-mail to Mr. Morgado as a follow-up to this issue.

Old Business

None

Our next meeting will be on January 11, 2005
Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by
Barbara Smith